



Carroll's Best

The Board of Carroll County Commissioners is proud to announce that Tom Harris, the Chief Building Inspector for Carroll County, has won the 10th Annual Maryland Building Officials Association (MBOA) Building Inspector of the Year Award. The Board of County Commissioners will formally recognize Mr. Harris for this honor during open session on Tuesday, December 11, 2012. He was nominated for the award by the Carroll County Bureau of Permits and Inspections based on his exemplary service.

Mr. Harris was hired in February, 2008 as an Electrical Inspector for the county, but was later transitioned to Building Inspector in January, 2010. In July of 2011, Mr. Harris was promoted to Chief Building Inspector for Carroll County. Currently, he holds several licenses and certifications including:

1. State of Maryland Master Electrician's License
2. Residential Building Inspector
3. Residential Electrical Inspector
4. Residential Energy Inspector/Plans Examiner
5. Commercial Building Inspector

The MBOA selected Mr. Harris because of his exceptional resourcefulness in new building technology, problem solving ability, and his camaraderie within the department. He has become a mentor and team leader with his staff, offering a bright light for the future of the county building inspection process. The Bureau of Permits and Inspections are very lucky to have Mr. Harris as a colleague with such incredible devotion and dedication to his trade. The Board of County Commis-

sioners congratulate Mr. Harris for his outstanding achievement.

Tyler Wagner



December 21

Much has been made of December 21, 2012. Scenarios with cataclysmic events, polar shifts, and planetary or galaxy alignments all lead to the end of days here on Earth. Adding further wood to the fire of doomsday scenarios is the fact that the Mayan calendar seems to expire on this date. Popular culture has latched onto this notion, releasing blockbuster movies like "2012" and premiering several television shows such as "Doomsday Preppers". Mother Nature certainly is not helping to dispel the rumors with her recent actions with Super Storm Sandy, tremendous wildfires, powerful earthquakes, and titanic volcanic eruptions around the world. The potential hysteria has forced government agencies to divert attention and release calming statements regarding December 21, 2012. Wave after wave of doomsday predictions comes forward, but very few of them actually make use of scientific evidence. Instead, they favor natural coincidences, ancient predictions and calendars to provide the driving force for their assertions.

cont.

Commissioners' Meeting Minutes

Please follow this link to read the minutes of the Commissioner meetings:

<http://ccgovernment.carr.org/ccg/commiss/votes/>

CARROLL COUNTY

a great place to live, a great place to work, a great place to play!

December 21 cont.

Looking back through recorded history, doomsday hypotheses are not new to the 21st century. In fact, people have been predicting the end of days before Christ's birth. The ancient Romans were some of the first to record their ideas of the apocalypse, all ending with the fiery destruction of Rome. Several individuals themselves have publicized their beliefs multiple times, coming up empty every time of course. Most recently, this can be demonstrated by Harold Camping, the President of Family Radio, who, for the fourth time, predicted the end of the world to occur on May 21, 2011. On May 22nd, after noticing that he had again made an error in his calculations, Camping pushed the date back to October 21, 2011. Because I still have the ability to write this article, I am certain Harold Camping was incorrect. Camping has since suffered a stroke and has faded from the public spotlight.

A shining light in the darkness, NASA has stepped forward to combat many of the popular geologic and celestial doomsday predictions for December 21st. Their scientists have repeatedly ripped apart prognostications of the apocalypse because of the predictor's lack of proof and wild fanaticism. No, the Earth will not be hit by some large celestial body. No, the Earth's magnetic poles will not suddenly reverse causing a massive disruption in force of gravity. No, the Earth will not be torn apart by huge seismic events happening at one time leading to entire cities falling into the planet's molten core. In fact, December 21st seems to be just another day on the calendar scheduled to come and go as any date does.

While most apocalyptic speculations are best served in back pages of tabloid newspapers, there are important lessons to take from them. As we learned most recently from Super Storm Sandy, preparation is a necessity. Not every person needs to have thousands of pounds of food saved up or a built-in bomb shelter, but a smart survival kit should be a part of any family's supplies. Make sure the water supply is plentiful, store non-perishable foods, and build a reserve of batteries,

Board and Commission Openings

The Board of County Commissioners is looking for people who are interested in serving on the **Environmental Advisory Council**. Anyone interested in serving on this or any board should complete the application available by following this link:

<http://ccgovernment.carr.org/ccg/commiss/boards/applicat.pdf>

and send the completed application along with a resume to: Board of County Commissioners

Attn: Denise Hoover

225 N. Center Street, Room 300

Westminster, MD 21157

or by email to dhoover@ccg.carr.org

flashlights, & radios to stay connected to emergency personnel in the community. Finally, make sure to know all possible evacuation routes to safe areas.

It would not be proper to end such an article without making a prediction based solely on personal feelings, devoid of any proof. Therefore, I believe that December 21st will end up being another day of human existence on planet Earth, and that the sun will rise on December 22nd. Society will look back on this date and compare it to the horrifying moments just after the Y2K disaster took place in 2000. All three of the computers that died on January 1, 2000 will be forever remembered as their internal components could not

handle the drastic switch from the 20th to the 21st

century. Stay safe out there. Happy holidays everyone.

Tyler Wagner



MEETINGS: Unless noted otherwise, meetings will be held in the County Office Building at 225 North Center Street, Westminster. All times are subject to change. Check the County's website or call 410-836-2400 as the date approaches to confirm date and time of the meeting.

Please follow this link to see all upcoming meetings. <http://ccgovernment.carr.org/ccg/commiss/calendar/Calendar.pdf>



Carroll County Recreation & Parks: December Events

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA -Arlington Cemetery

Saturday, December 15

Join us as we go to Arlington Cemetery to volunteer assisting with the placing of wreaths on the graves in this annual event. This year the goal is to place wreaths on all of the graves. In order to do this, they are asking everyone to go on to their website WreathsAcrossAmerica.org and sponsor a wreath (click on the sponsor link and chose to buy one or more wreaths at \$15 each*). Community service hours for students-bring your form. After the completion of the project, the bus will take us Union Station for lunch on your own. Depart from the Carroll County Office building, 225 N. Center Street, Westminster.

TIME: 6:30am–approx. 2:30pm FEE: \$35* *(plus lunch on your own)

**wreath sponsorship is an additional fee & must be done at the website

Bear Branch Nature Center Programs

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, December 15

Celebrate the season by joining the staff at Hashawha for a fun evening of music and crafts. Explore Bear Branch Nature Center and enjoy live music provided by our wonderful volunteers. Age: all.

TIME: 5-8pm

WINTER SOLSTICE HIKE FOR KIDS!

Friday, December 21

Winter is here once more! Learn what makes this time of year so special before venturing outside for a walk around Bear Branch Nature Center as we celebrate the upcoming winter solstice. A snack will be provided. Bring a hammer .

Age: 8-12

TIME: 7-8:30pm FEE: \$7

PLANETARIUM SHOW

Friday, December 21

Join the Westminster Astronomical Society for an evening under the dome. Learn about the stars and constellations of the night sky.

Age: 8-adult

TIME: 7:30-8:30pm FEE: \$5

Piney Run Nature Center Programs

MOTHER NATURE, MOM & ME

Dec-Feb 3 sessions Tues OR Fridays

Children, bring along mom, dad, a grandparent or other adult and dress for the weather, as we always spend some time outside during this fabulous preschool program! Learn

about nature through outdoor and indoor activities, crafts, songs, and stories.

Age: 4-6

TIME: 11-11:45am FEE: \$18

BABES IN THE WOODS

Dec-Feb 3 sessions Tues OR Fridays

Children, bring along mom, dad, a grandparent or other adult and dress for the weather, as we always spend some time outside during this fabulous preschool program! Learn about nature through outdoor and indoor activities, crafts, songs, and stories.

Age: 3

TIME: 10-10:45am FEE: \$18

ZZZZZZZ - LOOK WHO'S SLEEPING!

Wednesday, December 12

Ever wonder why some animals eat a lot during the fall? Come find out how some of our furry and scaly critters adapt to the long cold winter months. Following a short discussion we will hike outside to look for hibernation spots, and finish with a craft to take home.

Age: 3-7

TIME: 9-10am FEE: \$5

WINTER FAMILY CAMPFIRE & OWL PROWL

Friday, December 14

We will begin our adventure exploring the woods of Piney Run for the sounds of our resident owls. Following our hike, we will gather by the campfire to warm up with hot cider and s'mores. Dress warm – flash lights with red bulbs included.

Age: all

TIME: 7-8:30pm FEE: \$14

NATURAL DECORATIONS FOR KIDS

Saturday, December 15

Back by popular demand!!! Join us for a morning of creativity and fun! Help your child celebrate the holiday season by making natural ornaments and decorations to give as special gifts or just for fun! We will also enjoy some delicious holiday treats after the craft session.

TIME: 10am-12pm FEE: \$10

MISTLETOE, HOLLY, POINSETTIA, REINDEER & MORE!

Wednesday, December 19

Discover how the holidays are filled with all types of plants and animals from the natural world! With a brief story, hike, and then a craft, this is sure to be a great way to begin the holiday season!

Age: 3–6

TIME: 10-11am FEE: \$5

cont.



A Year of Achievement

As the year draws to a close the Board of County Commissioners believes it is appropriate to review the year and report their accomplishments to Carroll's residents. It is easy to forget the efficiencies made and the problems solved in the day-to-day working environment, but it is important to remember these strides in order to ensure that the county is moving in a positive direction for the benefit of its residents. So below is a list of the achievements made by the Board and county staff for 2012:

- Economic relief ~ streamlined development review process
- Veterans Advisory Council and Veterans Shuttle
- Private Non-Profit Workgroup formed to study best practices and improve system efficiencies
- Celebrating America Summer Adventure Program successfully launched
- Solid Waste Workgroup Report provides a plan to deal with a portion of the county's municipal solid waste
- Property tax reduction for the second year in a row
- Excellent bond rating allowing the county to buy bonds at historically low rates and retire over \$17 million dollars of older, higher interest bonds
- Fleet Study completed showing the county efficiently uses resources in managing its fleet services
- Carroll County Regional Airport Master Plan Scope of Work authorized
- Awarded grant to study the feasibility of a bike & pedestrian trail in the Eldersburg area
- Creation of a best business practices program to review departmental goals and objectives and ensure cost efficient operations
- County Mission Statement developed around which all government operations are aligned
- Leader in the state to protect property rights of our citizens
- Expansion of the Fallen Hero Tax Credit

- Get Business Now Seminar ~ one of most successful seminars ever offered to Carroll's business community
- Creation of the Carroll Business Path ~ a collaboration to enhance entrepreneurship and business development in Carroll County
- Sale of the Wheeler Building

.....

Rec. & Parks cont.

MORNING BIRD WALK

Thursday, Dec 20

Venture outside and join Dave Harvey of the Carroll County Bird Club for a morning bird walk. Search for the many different types of songbirds, waterfowl, raptors, and woodpeckers that inhabit Piney Run Park. Beginning birders are welcome. We suggest bringing along binoculars and field guides. Dress for the weather since walks occur rain or shine. Meet at the front door of the Nature Center. Age: 10-adult
TIME: 8:30am FEE: \$5

HORRAY FOR WINTER!

Friday, December 21

Let's celebrate the beginning of winter by making a cake – a winter food cake for the birds, that is! Using shortening, birdseed, dried fruits and more – let's create delicious cakes for our winter birds to enjoy!
Age: 3-7
TIME: 10-11am FEE: \$5

Stay in contact with County Government

County Government wants to connect with you. By following Carroll County through one of these outlets, you will know what's happening in your county office building.

Follow us on:

Twitter - @CarrollCoMd

Website - <http://ccggovernment.carr.org/ccg>

Flickr - <http://www.flickr.com/photos/carrollcountygov/>

YouTube <http://www.youtube.com/user/CarrollCountyGov>

County Government Channel 24 – programming schedule
<http://cablecast.cmcmd.tv/cablecast/public/Main.aspx?ChannelID=2>

"Like us on Facebook" with this link - <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Carroll-County-Government-Maryland/242700532491347>

Contact Your Commissioners

District 5: Doug Howard, President, dhoward@ccg.carr.org

District 3: Dave Roush, droush@ccg.carr.org, Vice President

District 2: Haven Shoemaker, Secretary, hshoemaker@ccg.carr.org

District 4: Richard Rothschild, rrothschild@ccg.carr.org

District 1: Robin Frazier, rfrazier@ccg.carr.org